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MEDIA RELEASE

INDEPENDENT REVIEW URGENTLY NEEDED FOR ACT SENTENCING AND BAIL OUTCOMES

The Australian Federal Police Association (AFPA) is dismayed after revelations of a recidivist teenage offender, arrested four times in the last seven weeks for bail breaches and other offences, being allowed by the ACT judiciary to remain in the community.

AFPA President Alex Caruana said it was another example of the ACT judiciary placing the rights of an offender above those of the community.

“It is a sorry state of affairs when a teenager has been able to re-offend simply because of lazy and superficial judicial processes. Clearly the judiciary need to be accountable for these decisions, but to whom?”

“The ACT Attorney-General has more than enough evidence in front of him demonstrating that the sentencing and bail outcomes handed down by the ACT judiciary are consistently putting the general community at risk.

The AFPA is again challenging the ACT Attorney-General, and the judiciary that he is responsible for, to display a modicum of transparency and accountability by establishing an independent review into sentencing and bail in the ACT.

Mr Caruana said that the ACT Attorney-General had previously commissioned a study by the Justice and Community Safety Directorate on bail outcomes in the ACT, along with the establishment of the ACT Government Law and Sentencing Advisory Council.

“Over four months ago, the ACT Government announced a Law and Sentencing Advisory Council. Since its announcement in October, what work has been done? Where is the Council?”

“It appears that the announcement of the Law and Sentencing Advisory Council, and the study by the Directorate, was just more lip service from the Attorney-General and ACT Government. Has anyone seen any further information about the study? Is a study even occurring?”

“It’s clear that the ACT Government doesn’t have programs or initiatives in place to stop juvenile recidivist offending. Before they legislate a raise in the age of criminal responsibility, they need to address this deficiency,” Mr Caruana said.

For comments:

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